Environmental Assessment Summary 2005-2007 Program Plan

Program Mission: Measure and assess environmental conditions in Washington State.

POG Result: Improve the Quality of Natural Resources			
Activity **What we do**	**Desired Results** **What We Want to Achieve**	**Strategies** **How We Will Do It**	**Measures for Accountability** **How We Will Measure Success**
Monitor, assess, and forecast the quality of state waters, and measure stream flows statewide.	Using an efficient mix of monitoring designs and programs, we are able to reliably assess and report on the health of freshwater rivers and streams, lakes, marine and estuarine waters, and marine sediments statewide. We are able to reliably evaluate stream flows in salmon critical basins and key watersheds statewide, compare actual flows to in-stream flow targets, and make near real-time stream flow data available to the public via Ecology's web site.	• Maintain and operate marine and freshwater monitoring networks, a statewide stream gauging network, an invasive aquatic plants monitoring program, and marine and lake beach monitoring. • Develop a Comprehensive Water Monitoring strategy for Ecology in collaboration with Ecology's Water Quality Program, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the Governor's Monitoring Forum, and other key clients, stakeholders, and partners. • Participate as an active contributor to the Governor's Monitoring Forum, the Puget Sound Ambient Monitoring Program, and other interagency bodies mandated to coordinate multiple agency monitoring efforts. • Engage new monitoring technologies to increase temporal/spatial coverage, improve overall cost-effectiveness, and expand our ability to predict important changes in both water quality and stream flow measurements.	• Percent of freshwater ambient monitoring stations not meeting water quality criteria (by region). • Percent of marine ambient monitoring stations not meeting water quality criteria. • Condition of Puget Sound sediments (percent area) (annual measure). • Percent of marine swimming beaches posted for not meeting water quality criteria (May-Sept). • Percent of stream flows below critical low flows. • Actual stream flows compared to in-stream flow rules (percent meeting target flow) - *in development.* • Percent of sites not meeting water quality criteria for toxics in fish tissue (annual measure).

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Conduct environmental studies for pollution source identification and control.	Timely, peer-reviewed scientific studies on pollution problems enable Ecology managers to make sound environmental decisions.	• Conduct pollution studies (especially water cleanup studies to calculate total maximum daily loads) to address known or suspected problems at individual sites or across regional areas. • Evaluate more cost-effective, streamlined approaches to conducting TMDL studies. • Implement intensive monitoring studies or directed research projects to improve our knowledge of the effects of environmental management activities. • Coordinate with client programs to develop specific studies and investigations that support their management priorities.	• Number of polluted stream and river segments (i.e. the portion of a stream between two tributary inputs), and the number of lakes, and marine/estuarine bays, evaluated in water cleanup study reports (TMDL studies). • Number of environmental studies completed by EAP. • *Selected individual study results may be reported each quarter.*
Measure environmental contaminants by performing laboratory analyses.	Manchester Environmental Laboratory accurately measures and reports contaminant levels in submitted samples.	• Operate a full-service environmental chemistry laboratory providing technical and analytical support for environmental chemistry and microbiology. • Stay current with technology and methods in order to meet the needs of clients.	• Number of chemical analyses completed for clients. • Percent of acceptable results from proficiency testing of “blind” samples analyzed by Manchester Environmental Laboratory.

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		• Optimally balance workload, production, method development, and staffing with regard to costs/revenues and core agency mission/objectives. • Continue to improve and integrate laboratory information technology systems and resolve connectivity to the agency domain "forest."	
Assure environmental laboratories can provide quality data.	Environmental laboratories submitting data to the Departments of Ecology and Health demonstrate the capability to provide accurate, defensible data.	• Manage an accreditation program for environmental and drinking water laboratories. • Evaluate the ramifications of becoming an accrediting authority in the National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program (NELAP). • Develop or adopt a system for automatic proficiency testing (PT) tracking so as to allow performance measurement in a more timely way.	• Percent of acceptable results from proficiency testing of "blind" samples analyzed by 95 representative accredited laboratories (of 480 labs in the program).

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Improve the quality of data used for environmental decision making.	Environmental data used by Ecology are reliable, credible, and defensible. EAP monitoring plans are adequately designed to collect accurate scientific data. Ecology grantee monitoring plans are adequately designed to collect accurate scientific data.	• Administer Ecology's QA policy (1-21), provide training and support for QAPP development, and assist Ecology staff with technical review of plans and QA/QC data. • Evaluate the optimal balance and priority of quality assurance (QA) activities given resource limitations, including USEPA's recommendation for independent data quality validation. • Jointly develop and implement a Credible Data Policy with Water Quality Program. • EA Program maintains business lead role on Environmental Information Management Steering Committee.	• Percent of data results added to Ecology's Environmental Information Management database that meet the highest level of data quality – *in development*. • Number of environmental monitoring plans completed by EAP.